



Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

More than 41 thousand Ayushman Bharat- Health & Wellness Centres (AB-HWCs) provide Universal and Comprehensive Primary Health Care especially during COVID-19

8.8 crore footfalls recorded at the HWCs in the last five months

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The Health and Wellness Centers (HWCs) form the primary pillar of Ayushman Bharat envisaging to provisioning of universal and comprehensive primary health care through transformation of 1,50,000 Sub Health Centres and Primary Health Centres into HWCs by 2022.

There are numerous examples of the extraordinary contribution being made by the AB-HWCs in the fight against COVID-19. In Jharkhand, as part of a State wide Intensive Public Health Survey Week, HWC teams screened people for Influenza Like Illness (ILI) and Severe Acute Respiratory Illness (SARI) symptoms and facilitated testing for COVID-19. The HWC team at Subalaya in Odisha conducted health check-ups and created awareness among people about preventive measures for COVID-19 such as frequent handwashing with soap and water, wearing masks/face covers while stepping out in public spaces, maintaining adequate physical distancing when interacting with people etc. They also conducted wellness sessions for migrants at the temporary medical camps functioning as quarantine centres. The HWC team of Grandhi in Rajasthan supported the local district administration in screening all travelers for COVID-19 at the Bikaner-Jodhpur border check post. HWC Tynring team in Meghalaya conducted orientation of community leaders and school teachers on preventive measures to prevent community spread of COVID-19.

As a testimony of the foundational work in the communities they serve, 8.8 crore footfalls have been recorded at the HWCs in the five months since February 1st of this year. This is almost the same as the number of footfalls recorded from April 14th, 2018 to January 31st, 2020, in 21 months, despite restrictions on movement of people during the intervening lockdown periods this year. Apart from this, in the last five months, 1.41 crore individuals were screened at the HWCs for hypertension, 1.13 crore for diabetes and 1.34 crore for oral, breast or cervical cancer. Medicines were dispensed at the HWCs to about 5.62 lakh patients of hypertension and 3.77 lakh diabetes patients during the month of June alone, despite the challenges posed by COVID-19. As many as 6.53 lakh yoga and wellness sessions have also been organised at the HWCs in the period since the COVID-19 outbreak.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the resilience of health systems was reflected through continued operationalization of HWCs and continued delivery of non-COVID-19 essential health services while also meeting the urgent tasks of prevention and management of COVID-19. Between the period of January to June, 2020, additional 12,425 HWCs were operationalized, increasing the number of HWCs from 29,365 to 41,790.

HWC teams have played a key role in ensuring that non-COVID essential services are provided to their communities. Having undertaken the population-based screenings for non-communicable diseases, the HWC teams already have a list of those with chronic disease and are able to rapidly screen individuals with co-morbidities and provide advice for protection against infection. Immunization sessions are being organized by the HWC teams where medical checkups of pregnant women are ensured. Delivery of essential medicines to TB, Leprosy, Hypertensive and Diabetic patients is also being undertaken by the HWC teams.

Health and Wellness Centres have demonstrated that creation of strong primary health care systems closer to the community are critical to the delivery of essential primary health care services to the community while also responding to the challenge of managing a pandemic.

Some glimpses from Ayushman Bharat HWCs: brining healthcare closer to people





MV/SG

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